

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SWF-01 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-06 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-02

SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00 LAB-03 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01

AGR-10 OES-04 IO-10 L-02 H-02 SS-15 NSC-05 PM-03

DODE-00 IGA-01 /111 W

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7711

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

UNCLAS EC BRUSSELS 8445

PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EEC, EAID, SY

SUBJECT: EC FOOD AID TO SYRIA

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 7780

(B) STATE 227483

THE MISSION HAS RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATION FROM EC COMMISSION OFFICIAL RABOT REGARDING EC POSITION ON ITS FOOD AID TO SYRIA QUOTE:

1. AS REGARDS THE FIGURES TO BE USED AS THE BASIS FOR CALCULATING THE UMR, WE NOTE THE REASONS YOU HAVE ADVANCED FOR PREFERRING THE OFFICIAL IMPORT STATISTICS OF THE RECIPIENT COUNTRY. WE NOTE ALSO, HOWEVER, THAT IN THE CASE IN QUESTION THERE ARE AT LEAST 3 DIFFERENT SETS OF FIGURES: THOSE IN YOUR LETTER OF 21 OCT., (BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED IN REF. B), THOSE IN THE US NOTIFICATION AND THOSE RECEIVED BY OURSELVES FROM THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT. IN UNCLASSIFIED

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ADDITION TO THE DIFFERENT AMOUNTS SHOWN, THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE

INCONSISTENCIES NOT TO SAY OMISSIONS IN THE DISTINCTION INSIDE THESE FIGURES BETWEEN AID AND TRADE. IT IS FOR THIS KIND OF REASON THAT WE FIND IT PREFERABLE TO WORK ON THE BASIS OF IWC FIGURES, CORRECTED AS MAY BE NECESSARY WITH SUCH SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION AS IS AVAILABLE.

2. AS REGARDS THE METHOD OF CALCULATION FROM THE GIVEN BASE, OUR FIRST FIGURE OF 204,400 WAS DERIVED AS A SIMPLE AVERAGE OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS. IN NEGOTIATION WITH THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT THE POINT WAS MADE TO US, AND CONSIDERED REASONABLE, THAT WITHIN THESE FIGURES THERE WAS A MARKED DOWNWARD TREND IN COMMERCIAL IMPORTS, AND THAT THIS MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN FIXING THE UMR FOR 1975.

3. THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES OF THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT, AND THEIR IMPROVED DOMESTIC HARVEST ALSO SEEMED TO US TO JUSTIFY (WITHIN THE REGULAR CSD GUIDELINES) A REDUCTION OF THE UMR BELOW THE SIMPLE AVERAGE.

4. WE THEREFORE FIXED THE UMR AT 102,000 MT AND REGARD THIS AS THE MOST REASONABLE FIGURE. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE REFERENCE IN THE US NOTIFICATION TO "UMR 204,400 MT AS PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED BY THE EEC" IS NOT ACCURATE: THE FIGURE OF 204,400 WAS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED BY US, BUT WE HAVE NOW FIXED IT AT THE LOWER FIGURE.

5. THE TRADE FIGURES FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS ALSO SHOW THAT THE US HAD NO SIGNIFICANT TRADE WITH SYRIA IN WHEAT, WHEREAS THE EEC HAS BEEN A MAJOR SUPPLIER THROUGHOUT.

IN CONCLUSION, MAY I SAY THAT WE ARE PLEASED TO NOTE THE INCLUSION OF TRADE STATISTICS IN RESPECT OF THE EASTERN BLOCK COUNTRIES IN THE US FIGURES WHICH FORM PART OF YOUR NOTIFICATION. WE HOPE THAT THIS HAS NOW BECOME NORMAL PRACTICE, SINCE IT MAKES THE FIGURES MORE DEFINITELY MEANINGFUL. UNQUOTE. GREENWALD

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